

**BUSINESS REPORT**

**MONTANA HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES  
61st LEGISLATURE - REGULAR SESSION**

**HOUSE JOINT APPROPRIATIONS SUBCOMMITTEE ON EDUCATION COMMITTEE**

**Date:** Monday, February 16, 2009  
**Place:** Capitol

**Time:** 9:00 am  
**Room:** 472

**BILLS and RESOLUTIONS HEARD:**

Prefix (HB, HR, HJR, SB, SR, or SJR) and number. Add Postponed (PP) when appropriate:

HB 2

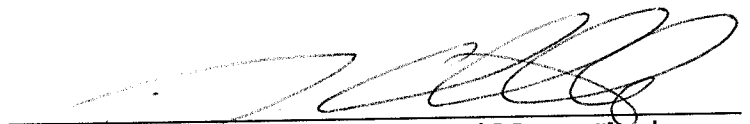
\_\_\_\_\_  
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**EXECUTIVE ACTION TAKEN:**

Prefix (HB, HR, HJR, SB, SR, or SJR) and number. Enter P(pass) F(failed) DPAA (do pass as amended) BC(be concurred in) BCAA (be concurred in as amended):

HB 2 - \_\_\_\_\_  
item 2A item 4 \_\_\_\_\_  
item 2 \_\_\_\_\_  
item 3 \_\_\_\_\_

**COMMENTS:**

  
\_\_\_\_\_  
REP. Dan Villa, Chairman

**HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES**  
**Roll Call**  
**Subcommittee on Education**

DATE: 2/16/2009

[illegible]

Senator Peterson      Re: (Request Committee bill....)

**HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES**  
**Roll Call - VOTE**  
**Subcommittee on Education**

\_\_\_\_\_ Motion \_\_\_\_\_

DATE: 2/16/09

*Failed -  
need supermajority*

<u>NAME</u>	<u>Yes</u>	<u>No</u>
Sen. Debby Barrett	✓	
Sen. Bob Hawks		✓
Sen. Jim Peterson	✓	
Rep. Roy Hollandsworth	✓	
Rep. Cheryl Steenson		✓
Rep. William Glaser	✓	
<i>chair</i> Rep. Dan Villa		✓

**HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES**  
**Roll Call - VOTE**  
**Subcommittee on Education**

## Sen Peterson motion

DATE: 2/16/2009

motion - need supermajority  
Failed 5-2

[illegible]

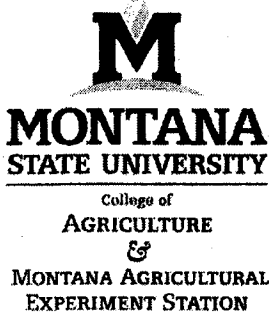
# 2009 Montana Legislative Session

## Joint Subcommittee on Education

Please sign in

*Claudia Morton* *Representative*

*Additional Documents*



February 3, 2009

Representative Dan Villa, Chairman  
Joint Appropriations Subcommittee on Education  
Capitol Building  
P.O. Box 200400  
Helena, MT 59620-0400

Dear Chairman Villa:

This is in response to your January 27, 2009 request for information on the Goals and Objectives of the Montana Agricultural Experiment Station (MAES) for the 2011 biennium and beyond. As an agency, we conduct research in support of Montana's #1 industry, agriculture, with the value of crop production at \$1.3B and the value of the livestock production at \$1.4B (2008 Montana Agricultural Statistics).

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Our **mission** is to generate and disseminate superior information and solutions to increase the competitiveness of Montana agricultural and natural resource enterprises and to preserve environmental quality, improve the quality of life and add value to our resources. Our **goals** are:

- To conduct research that generates new knowledge, technologies and maintains the vitality of Montana's agricultural and natural resource industries and adds value to Montana,
- To enhance local and regional economic development,
- To develop cutting-edge outreach and education programs for stakeholders, and
- To provide dynamic programs and research opportunities for students.

These goals are implemented across research and outreach programs in: plant and animal systems, infectious diseases, environmental sciences (land, air, water), alternative bio-energy sources, reclamation, integrated pest management, resource stewardship and informed policy sciences. These same FTEs that implement the research programs are

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Dean and Director**

202 Linfield Hall  
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Bozeman, MT 59717-2860

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Fax (406) 994-6579  
<http://ag.montana.edu>

split-funded through traditional teaching (on-campus) support and a minority that are split-funded with the Extension Service.

My response to the 2.4% budget reduction as presented in the proposed Executive Budget would be to eliminate FTE, both at the faculty and staff levels across MAES, as this is the primary and on-going budget expenditure. This decrease in the agricultural research workforce would impact research programs and services to Montana agriculture. I fully appreciate the constraints that you and your Legislative colleagues are working with. As MAES Director, I will also work within designated financial resource boundaries to make decisions and deliver our programs with quality and impact.

Thank you for your request and overall efforts in the 61<sup>st</sup> Legislative Assembly. I remain fully available to answer any questions regarding the above material or to provide additional information on the Montana Agricultural Experiment Station.

Sincerely,



Jeff Jacobsen  
Dean and Director

cc: President Geoff Gamble  
Cathy Conover  
Mick Robinson



**Dan Villa, Chairman  
Joint Appropriations Committee on Education**

**In response to your request for our agency goals for the coming biennium, I offer the following.**

**Fire Services Training School  
Goals 2010 / 2011**

**Fire Services  
Training School**

Target 12 community fire services to work with to reduce their insurance rate.  
Revise and update our curriculum materials to meet revised national standards.  
Update our Strategic Plan

Assure geographic distribution of our training services

Deliver training service in each of our 56 counties at least annually.

Provide four training opportunities with 65% of local fire services annually.

Maintain an impact rate of at least 65%

Our impact is evident in the performance is exhibited in the operations of 65% of our local fire companies.

Expand the utilization of realistic mobile training props.

Make new prop operational and overhaul Burn Prop #1

Maintain our accreditation with both the National Professional Qualifications Board for the Fire Service and International Fire Service Accrediting Congress.  
Given current level funding, maintain our training rate of 3700 firefighters annually.

Given additional funding, expand our training services to meet emergency medical training needs of firefighters.

**Respectfully Submitted**

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Seldon S. Weedon'.

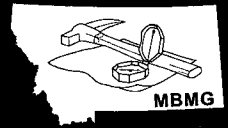
**Seldon S. Weedon  
Director  
Fire Services Training School**

*Montana State University,  
U.S. Department of  
Agriculture and Montana  
Counties Cooperating.  
MSU Extension is an equal  
opportunity/affirmative  
action provider of  
educational outreach.*

750 6th St. SW Suite 205  
Great Falls, MT 59404  
www.mtana.edu/wwwfire

Tel (406) 761-7885  
Fax (406) 268-3735



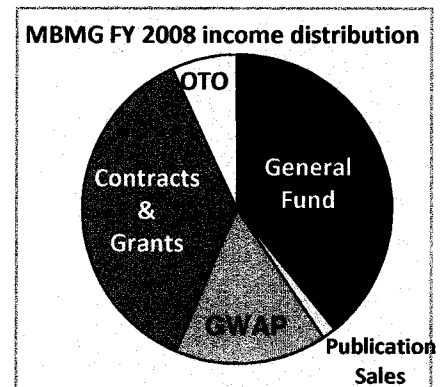


February 2, 2009

Representative Dan Villa  
Capitol Building  
PO Box 200400  
Helena, MT 59620-0400

Dear Representative Villa *and*  
Members of the Joint Appropriations Subcommittee on Education:

This letter is in response to Chairman Villa's January 27, 2009 letter requesting the 2011 biennial goals and objectives of the Montana Bureau of Mines and Geology (MBMG). As indicated on accompanying chart, the MBMG derives its State support from: (1) a general fund appropriation (unrestricted), including income from MBMG's publication sales, and (2) RIT, RIGWA, and Natural Resources Operations Account funds (restricted) that support the Ground-Water Assessment Program (GWAP). Additionally, during the 2009 biennium, HB 831 and HB 304 provided one-time-only (OTO) funds for some specific tasks. As discussed below, even though OTO funding will cease, statute requires that certain tasks continue. Without continuation of some of the OTO funding, the additional work becomes an unfunded mandate. Copies of the slides discussing goals for the MBMG and the GWAP that were shown during the MBMG's presentation before the Subcommittee are attached.



**The MBMG goals for the 2011 biennium are to maintain current programs, to conduct new investigations as judged most critical to the state, and to more efficiently deliver information to the public.** As Montana's geological survey, the MBMG is mandated to conduct research and deliver information on all aspects of the State's geology, including ground-water resources. This gives us broad responsibility to respond to needs that we identify, to respond to requests for cooperation and/or information from other organizations, agencies, and the public, and to receive information from these sources and integrate it with our own data so that we can provide the best service to Montana's citizens. Our biggest problem is not finding new goals, but prioritizing existing efforts along with new issues so that we can sensibly operate within the limits of our budget and staffing. Therefore, in setting goals for the coming biennium we are guided by:

- Within the framework described above, the MBMG uses its general fund appropriation to maintain investigations into certain fundamental "core" areas to better understand the State's geologic resources. Primary among these are geologic mapping, minerals resources and mining activities, energy resources, aspects of ground-water resources outside the scope of GWAP, responsibility for Montana's regional seismic network, geologic hazards, and outreach and education through Montana Tech's Mineral Museum, publications, and other activities. In addition, many questions or issues continually arise, and are addressed as best we can on a short-term basis.
- Unrestricted general funds are used as match for contracts and grants. For example our geologic mapping effort is doubled by using general funds to provide the 1:1 match in non-federal dollars required for STATEMAP, a highly competitive grant program administered by the US Geological Survey. Success in

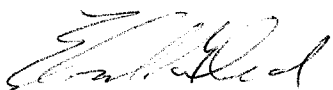
leveraging our General Fund dollars as match for contracts and grants is shown by the approximately equal proportions between General Funds and Contracts and Grants on the chart above.

- Challenges arise from the fact that over decades the MBMG's budget and staffing has effectively shrunk. This requires that new initiatives, goals, or investigations come at the expense of cuts in other project areas, or finding supplementary funding through contracts and grants. The MBMG's 1985 general fund appropriation of \$1,433,821 when corrected for inflation, would translate to \$2,867,642 in 2008 dollars. Our FY2008 general fund (HB 2) appropriation was \$1,888,718, or 34 percent less than the inflation-adjusted figure. Similarly, staffing has been reduced from more than 30 authorized FTEs supported by State general funds in the 1980s, to our present authorized level of 25.44. During the 10 years that I have been the MBMG director, we have never been able to reach that level; we have only 22.57 FTEs in our FY2009 budget. The proposed budget for the 2011 biennium aggravates this situation by increasing vacancy savings from 4% to 7%. This change will cost the MBMG \$133,527 or approximately one FTE research position, over the biennium.
- Compounding our funding issues is that the 60th Legislature directed the MBMG to receive and enter aquifer test data and hydrologic assessments into the Ground-Water Information Center database. It appropriated \$50,000 for staff support to process the data in the 2009 biennium but the fact that the appropriation was OTO for continuing work was inadvertently overlooked. Current statute requires that the work continue indefinitely. One resolution to this issue would be for the 61st Legislature to include a continuing appropriation of \$50,000 per biennium to fund the mandated work.
- The Board of Regents did not approve any new initiatives for MUS agencies for the coming biennium, so there are no new budget requests to pursue new goals or initiatives.

**Goals for the Ground-Water Assessment Program (GWAP) are reviewed and approved by its legislatively established Advisory Committee in accordance with the three-pronged mission of the program: aquifer characterization, monitoring, and information delivery.** Program funding is restricted; GWAP does not receive general fund dollars. Unfortunately, the both Governor's November 15 and December 15 proposed budgets for the 2011 biennium adjust the GWAP's budget only to the 2009 level of support, and do not provide additional funds in fiscal years 2010-2011 to provide a full adjustment to present law. Therefore, the GWAP would not have received additional funds even if Montana's current financial struggle had not required that state support for its most programs remain at the 2009 level.

I hope that this letter provides the information that the Subcommittee needs when it considers allocation of the proposed \$1.0 million appropriation. We would hope that additional funds, essentially reducing the MBMG's vacancy savings from 7% to 4% (\$133,527 on the biennium) and replacement of the \$50,000 (biennial) OTO appropriation with a continuing appropriation could be considered. Clearly, receiving a portion of this funding would benefit the MBMG in attaining its goals. I would be happy to provide further response to any questions.

Sincerely,



Edmond G. Deal  
Director and State Geologist

Cc: Sheila Stearns, Commissioner of Higher Education, Montana University System  
George Dennison, President, The University of Montana  
Frank Gilmore, Chancellor, Montana Tech of The University of Montana  
Chairman Jon Sesso, House Appropriations Committee



## Montana Bureau of Mines and Geology

MontanaTech  
THE UNIVERSITY OF MONTANA

### MBMG Goals: 2011 Biennium

2009 Montana Legislative Session

Use General Fund Appropriation to:

- Maintain core programs on Montana's geology/resources.
- Provide match required for contracts/grants.
- Conduct additional investigations as appropriate.
- Expand databases, internet access, and delivery of information.



Early 2010— move into Natural Resources Building.



## Montana Bureau of Mines and Geology

MontanaTech  
THE UNIVERSITY OF MONTANA

### GWAP Goals: 2011 Biennium

2009 Montana Legislative Session

**Monitoring:** Continue building long-term water-level and water-quality records.

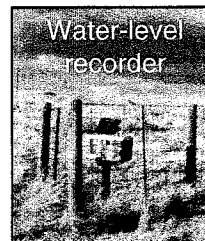
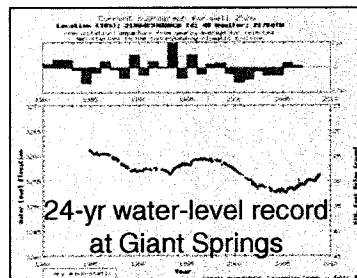
- Install telemetry to improve network efficiency.

**Characterization:** Continue field work in the Gallatin-Madison Study area.

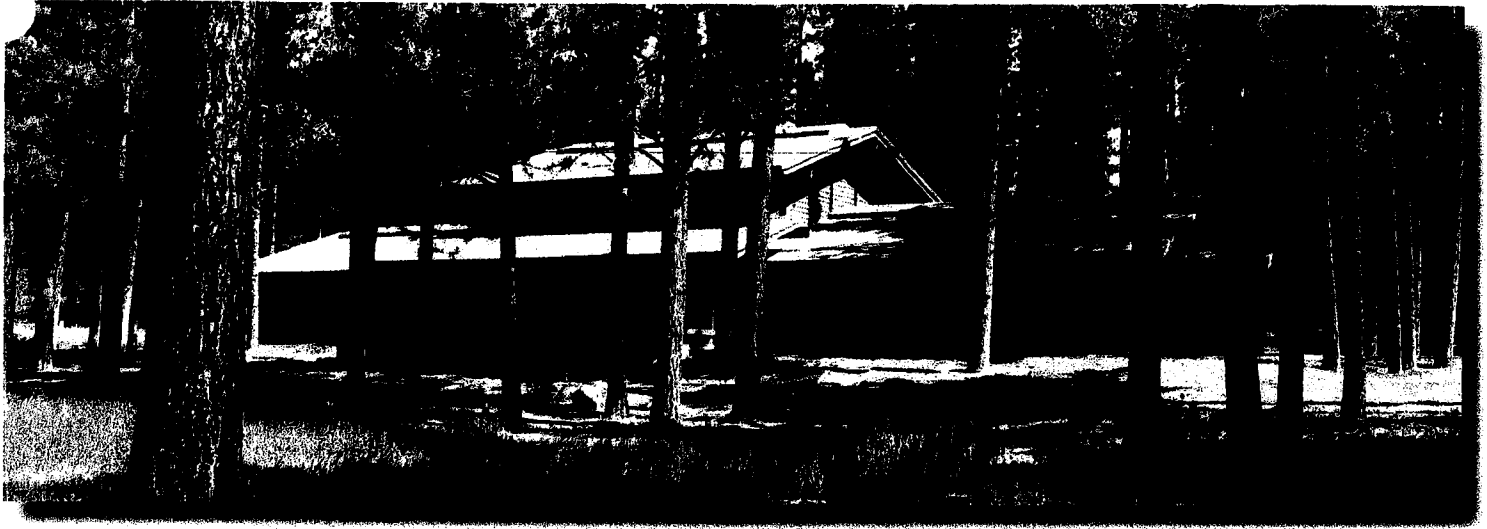
- Begin Park-Sweet Grass study area.
- Release at least 5-7 new maps and 1 atlas.

**GWIC:** New QA/QC tools to improve data quality.

- Improve public interface through implementation of mapping tools.



## **Montana Forest and Conservation Experiment Station: Goals and Objectives for the 2011 Biennium**



### **Introduction**

The Montana Forest and Conservation Experiment Station (MFCES) is the state-wide agency established by the Montana Legislature in 1937 to provide research, education, and outreach on critical issues affecting Montana's forests. Administered by the Montana University System through The University of Montana's College of Forestry and Conservation, MFCES has a proud history of serving Montanans through its independent, science-based approach to difficult forest management questions. Research and demonstrations over the years have made vital contributions on effective ways to grow timber, promote forest health, protect clean water, and sustain high-quality wildlife habitat. Work conducted through the MFCES will continue to generate opportunities for high-wage jobs, a diverse economy, and a superior quality of life for the people of Montana.

MFCES embraces an approach of openness and partnership with other forest landowners, schools, businesses, and public agencies across the state. It encourages joint projects and welcomes other organizations to utilize its facilities for educational and outreach purposes. The MFCES owns and manages two properties for research and outreach – the Lubrecht Experimental Forest, a 28,000 acre forest property that houses a conference center and forestry camp, and the Bandy Experimental Ranch, a 3,500 acre working ranch that provides a model for complementary management actions to sustain ecological functions and rural livelihoods.

### **Goals of the Montana Forest and Conservation Experiment Station**

The long-standing goals of the MFCES are threefold: (1) To provide understanding and demonstration of the role and function of forests and conservation to the well-being of the people of Montana; (2) To foster educational attainment for upcoming generations of conservation leaders; and (3) To create employment opportunities for Montanans from the wise use and stewardship of forests. These goals are realized through the design and execution of research projects, the establishment of formal educational programs and workshops to disseminate the latest discoveries in forest management, and outreach to public and private partners to test and evaluate the effects and benefits of forest management operations. As new questions or concerns regarding forest management emerge, MFCES uses its solid foundation to attract additional financial resources to conduct research and outreach programs. Over the last decade, the MFCES has leveraged state resources by a remarkable ratio of over 9 to 1 via external contracts and grants, such that in any given biennium, MFCES contributes approximately \$20 million to Montana's economy.

### **Goals and Objectives for the 2011 Biennium**

For the upcoming biennium MFCES will continue its ongoing work in key areas of forest management such as the impacts of management treatments on forest health, methods to combat insect attacks, efficient logging

systems, measures to protect watersheds, and management practices to improve the full complement of native Montana wildlife. In addition, the MFCES is proposing action on two new, critical areas affecting forests: (1) The impact of changing climate on Montana's forests, farms, and rangelands; and (2) The means to use forests while protecting Montana residents from wildfire within the Wildland Urban Interface.

### **Support for a Montana Climate Office**

MFCES is requesting \$165,000 over the next biennium to support the state's economy through the firm set up and strengthening of a State Climate Office.

**Goal:** Provide Montana ranchers, farmers, forest owners, and citizens with easily accessible, reliable, high-quality information on climate trends, moisture availability, and climate impacts that focus on Montana needs.

**Objective 1:** Establish in the Montana Climate Office by the end of 2009, an expanded, user-friendly web presence that is linked to all forms of appropriate climate and moisture data, continuously updated and tailored to the interests of Montana landowners.

**Objective 2:** By the end of 2009 create an ongoing outreach program that joins the Montana Climate Office with other state agencies and services, such as the Extension Service, to identify climate trend data needs of Montana landowners and deliver necessary information to a broad range of users



### **Rationale for the Initiative**

Climate change affects Montana through rising temperatures and shorter winters, persistent summer droughts and changes in the resiliency of plant and animal communities. Ranchers, farmers, residents of cities and towns, and members of the tourism community are feeling the effects of these changes. Montana currently has no capability to develop climate measures or conduct locally relevant climate change analysis to understand the potential impact of these changes on Montana's economy. Additionally, Montana lacks a means to transfer needed climate information to all the affected individuals, businesses, and agencies that need real-time, accurate information and maps to respond and adapt to climate changes. To be forewarned is to be forearmed.

A PhD level bio-meteorologist coupled with an outreach specialist would be able to develop new climate measures and indicators for the state and update them regularly. They would be able to develop trustworthy state maps of growing seasons, heating and cooling days, energy forecasting, irrigation demand, solar loading, wind potential, and averages and extremes of temperature and precipitation. More importantly, they would provide the tools and access to get this information into the hands of those who need it most. Although a skeletal Montana Climate Office is already hosted by the MFCES, it is unfunded and inadequate for Montana's needs.

## Implementation of the Initiative

Funding of the initiative would allow for the support of a PhD bio-meteorologist and a Masters-level outreach coordinator to develop and provide the needed interactive tools and products from the State Climate Office. This small staff would work with other climate research and information resources nationwide to create an accessible, user-friendly web presence that offers real-time data and analysis on climate changes and impacts to all Montanans. Outreach activities would utilize existing extension offices and other agency capabilities to sponsor workshops and generate educational materials for all Montanans to receive critical information on climate trends and their implications to investments and land use decisions. Office space and administrative support would be provided by existing MFCES resources to increase efficiency and direct all new resources to useable products for Montana residents and businesses.

### Support for Improved Uses of Forests in the Wildland Urban Interface for Biofuels and Fire Risk Reduction

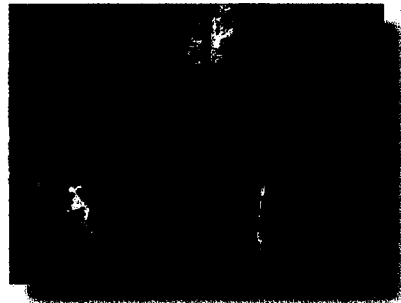
MFCES is requesting \$200,000 over the next biennium to improve the use of Montana's forests through the initiation of a forestry, wildland fire, and biofuels applied research program on the wildland urban interface in Montana.

**Goals:** (1) Increase the use of forests in Montana to support Montana forest industries by finding efficient ways to utilize Montana forests in the wildland-urban interface that include biofuels for energy; and (2) Reduce the risk from wildfire to Montana rural residents in the wildland urban interface while lowering the cost of fire suppression.

**Objective 1:** By summer 2010 establish research projects and demonstration areas on methods to increase efficiencies in the harvest, transport, and utilization of forest fuels in forest types common in the wildland urban interface.

**Objective 2:** Explore and describe by mid 2010 the economic potential of biofuels for Montana energy needs.

**Objective 3:** Synthesize existing research and apply new discoveries on methods to relieve wildfire risk and improve cost-savings for fire suppression organizations by the end of 2010.



### Rationale for the Initiative

Many Montana residents live within the wildland-urban interface (sometimes called the "WUI"), where frequent wildfires present risk to their homes and infrastructure. There are numerous opportunities across the state to provide science-based forest treatments in the WUI to help reduce fire risk while improving the vigor, productivity, and beauty of these forests. Simultaneously, the use of the wood products that emerge from the WUI provide substantial biomass that can be converted to energy (as biofuels) for homes, schools, or other energy needs. Yet the design of WUI treatments, the needs for ongoing maintenance, the ecological impacts, and the economic potential for biofuels can vary greatly depending on specific resource conditions or locations. There is a critical need to develop, test, and communicate operational guidelines for efficient and effective treatments across the varied WUI landscape.

Greater knowledge of potential WUI treatments and their benefits would offer forest landowners confidence that their diverse range of objectives could be fulfilled. Science-tested methods to improve the harvesting and utilization of wood products and other woody biomass from the WUI would allow timber operators to increase the number of treatments across Montana, creating additional jobs and income. The active treatment of forests with high fuel loadings within the WUI would mitigate the impacts from high intensity wildfires, reduce the cost of wildfire suppression and provide additional protection from wildfire risk to WUI residents.

### **Implementation of the Initiative**

Financial support to the WUI initiative will allow the establishment of timely research projects and science-based techniques to improve harvest operations and increase the profitability of forest operations. Implementation needs include support to a PhD-level forest researcher to coordinate the research program and develop outreach materials and workshops to distribute research findings. Demonstration areas will be established at Lubrecht Forest and other locations among cooperating landowners to allow innovations to be adopted in multiple locations across the state. Closer linkages with potential partners among fire suppression organizations and the existing forest stewardship network will be encouraged by the development of materials and web-based products that identify treatment opportunities and the economic implications of the utilization of biofuels. Application of research findings will also be advanced by the additional training made available to students at The University of Montana on these WUI treatment opportunities.

James Burchfield  
Interim Director  
MFCES  
January 30, 2009



## **Montana State University Extension Service FY11 Agency Goals and Objectives**

**Mission: Extend the presence of the State Land Grant University to all corners of Montana through the application of applied research, educational outreach and public engagement.**

### **I. Core Program Area Support**

Maintain core program areas (agricultural and natural resources, community and economic development, family and consumer sciences, 4-H youth development) and partnerships that currently exist.

- Cooperative agreements with all Montana counties and 5 Indian Reservations;
- Extension faculty and staff within 3 colleges and 8 departments on the MSU campus;
- 4-H Center for Youth Development: community and club programs, summer camps, Operation Military Kids and afterschool programs;
- Forestry faculty collaboration and partnership with University of Montana; and
- Expanded partnership with the Local Government Center.

### **II. Expand agro-security and bio-security**

MSU Extension will develop educational materials and conduct workshops to educate and assist disaster preparedness strategies at state and county levels. Extension will create a new linkage between campus based resources and county/tribal Extension offices to assist in early detection, first response, technical assistance and educational outreach on topics of agro- and bio-security.

- Early detection and identification of disease and environmental threats to crops and livestock;
- Statewide agro-security outreach will ensure plans and preparations are in place to provide assistance quickly and effectively;
- Develop a pipeline between the campus diagnostic laboratory and county offices; and
- Strengthen the ongoing commitment needed to provide education, applied research and technical support to meet the growing demands of agro-security and safe food systems.

### **III. Community vitality and economic sustainability**

MSU Extension faculty and staff will continue making a strategic, long-term commitment to working cooperatively with rural communities to address the on-going challenges of community vitality and economic sustainability.

- Developing the leadership skills of local residents;
- Creating networks and collaborations for local sustainability;
- Utilizing the resources of public, private and non-profit institutions;
- Capturing the physical and economic resources of local places; and
- Expanding the university as a portal to the state through the development of regional learning and outreach locations.

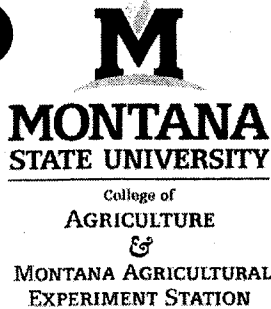
### **IV. Renewable Energy Outreach, Education and Dissemination**

Renewable energy sources, including wind, solar and biomass, along with increased energy efficiency outreach effort, will potentially reduce the reliance on fossil fuels and be a prospective source of economic income and sustainability for rural communities.

- Continue to develop workshops on wind leasing, basic steps of commercial wind development, and small wind systems;
- Establish partnerships with Wind Powering America and the National Renewable Energy Laboratory to develop new materials and curriculum in wind energy issues;
- Develop and maintain a website with comprehensive resources for those interested in learning about wind energy;
- Assist communities in developing feasibility studies on community-owned wind generation projects;
- Create cash flow/income statement software for producers interested in processing oilseeds into biodiesel; and
- Create educational materials on diverse topics such as small scale biodiesel production, oilseed processing and renewable energy mandates.



~~EXHIBIT~~  
~~DATE~~  
~~HB~~



February 3, 2009

Representative Dan Villa, Chairman  
Joint Appropriations Subcommittee on Education  
Capitol Building  
P.O. Box 200400  
Helena, MT 59620-0400

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Dean and Director**

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Sincerely,



Jeff Jacobsen  
Dean and Director

cc: President Geoff Gamble  
Cathy Conover  
Mick Robinson



**Dan Villa, Chairman**  
**Joint Appropriations Committee on Education**

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Update our Strategic Plan

Assure geographic distribution of our training services

Deliver training service in each of our 56 counties at least annually.

Provide four training opportunities with 65% of local fire services annually.

Maintain an impact rate of at least 65%

Our impact is evident in the performance is exhibited in the operations of 65% of our local fire companies.

Expand the utilization of realistic mobile training props.

Make new prop operational and overhaul Burn Prop #1

Maintain our accreditation with both the National Professional Qualifications Board for the Fire Service and International Fire Service Accrediting Congress.

Given current level funding, maintain our training rate of 3700 firefighters annually.

Given additional funding, expand our training services to meet emergency medical training needs of firefighters.

**Respectfully Submitted**

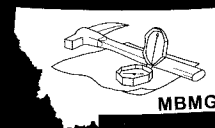
A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Seldon S. Weedon'. The signature is fluid and cursive, with a large initial 'S'.

**Seldon S. Weedon**  
**Director**  
**Fire Services Training School**

Montana State University,  
U.S. Department of  
Agriculture and Montana  
Counties Cooperating.  
MSU Extension is an equal  
opportunity/affirmative  
action provider of  
educational outreach.

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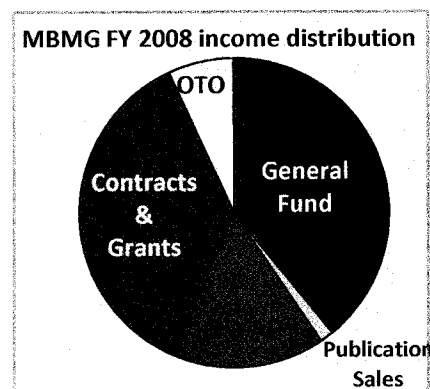


February 2, 2009

Representative Dan Villa  
Capitol Building  
PO Box 200400  
Helena, MT 59620-0400

Dear Representative Villa and  
Members of the Joint Appropriations Subcommittee on Education:

This letter is in response to Chairman Villa's January 27, 2009 letter requesting the 2011 biennial goals and objectives of the Montana Bureau of Mines and Geology (MBMG). As indicated on accompanying chart, the MBMG derives its State support from: (1) a general fund appropriation (unrestricted), including income from MBMG's publication sales, and (2) RIT, RIGWA, and Natural Resources Operations Account funds (restricted) that support the Ground-Water Assessment Program (GWAP). Additionally, during the 2009 biennium, HB 831 and HB 304 provided one-time-only (OTO) funds for some specific tasks. As discussed below, even though OTO funding will cease, statute requires that certain tasks continue. Without continuation of some of the OTO funding, the additional work becomes an unfunded mandate. Copies of the slides discussing goals for the MBMG and the GWAP that were shown during the MBMG's presentation before the Subcommittee are attached.



**The MBMG goals for the 2011 biennium are to maintain current programs, to conduct new investigations as judged most critical to the state, and to more efficiently deliver information to the public.** As Montana's geological survey, the MBMG is mandated to conduct research and deliver information on all aspects of the State's geology, including ground-water resources. This gives us broad responsibility to respond to needs that we identify, to respond to requests for cooperation and/or information from other organizations, agencies, and the public, and to receive information from these sources and integrate it with our own data so that we can provide the best service to Montana's citizens. Our biggest problem is not finding new goals, but prioritizing existing efforts along with new issues so that we can sensibly operate within the limits of our budget and staffing. Therefore, in setting goals for the coming biennium we are guided by:

- Within the framework described above, the MBMG uses its general fund appropriation to maintain investigations into certain fundamental "core" areas to better understand the State's geologic resources. Primary among these are geologic mapping, minerals resources and mining activities, energy resources, aspects of ground-water resources outside the scope of GWAP, responsibility for Montana's regional seismic network, geologic hazards, and outreach and education through Montana Tech's Mineral Museum, publications, and other activities. In addition, many questions or issues continually arise, and are addressed as best we can on a short-term basis.
- Unrestricted general funds are used as match for contracts and grants. For example our geologic mapping effort is doubled by using general funds to provide the 1:1 match in non-federal dollars required for STATEMAP, a highly competitive grant program administered by the US Geological Survey. Success in


leveraging our General Fund dollars as match for contracts and grants is shown by the approximately equal proportions between General Funds and Contracts and Grants on the chart above.

- Challenges arise from the fact that over decades the MBMG's budget and staffing has effectively shrunk. This requires that new initiatives, goals, or investigations come at the expense of cuts in other project areas, or finding supplementary funding through contracts and grants. The MBMG's 1985 general fund appropriation of \$1,433,821 when corrected for inflation, would translate to \$2,867,642 in 2008 dollars. Our FY2008 general fund (HB 2) appropriation was \$1,888,718, or 34 percent less than the inflation-adjusted figure. Similarly, staffing has been reduced from more than 30 authorized FTEs supported by State general funds in the 1980s, to our present authorized level of 25.44. During the 10 years that I have been the MBMG director, we have never been able to reach that level; we have only 22.57 FTEs in our FY2009 budget. The proposed budget for the 2011 biennium aggravates this situation by increasing vacancy savings from 4% to 7%. This change will cost the MBMG \$133,527 or approximately one FTE research position, over the biennium.
- Compounding our funding issues is that the 60th Legislature directed the MBMG to receive and enter aquifer test data and hydrologic assessments into the Ground-Water Information Center database. It appropriated \$50,000 for staff support to process the data in the 2009 biennium but the fact that the appropriation was OTO for continuing work was inadvertently overlooked. Current statute requires that the work continue indefinitely. One resolution to this issue would be for the 61st Legislature to include a continuing appropriation of \$50,000 per biennium to fund the mandated work.
- The Board of Regents did not approve any new initiatives for MUS agencies for the coming biennium, so there are no new budget requests to pursue new goals or initiatives.

**Goals for the Ground-Water Assessment Program (GWAP) are reviewed and approved by its legislatively established Advisory Committee in accordance with the three-pronged mission of the program: aquifer characterization, monitoring, and information delivery.** Program funding is restricted; GWAP does not receive general fund dollars. Unfortunately, the both Governor's November 15 and December 15 proposed budgets for the 2011 biennium adjust the GWAP's budget only to the 2009 level of support, and do not provide additional funds in fiscal years 2010-2011 to provide a full adjustment to present law. Therefore, the GWAP would not have received additional funds even if Montana's current financial struggle had not required that state support for its most programs remain at the 2009 level.

I hope that this letter provides the information that the Subcommittee needs when it considers allocation of the proposed \$1.0 million appropriation. We would hope that additional funds, essentially reducing the MBMG's vacancy savings from 7% to 4% (\$133,527 on the biennium) and replacement of the \$50,000 (biennial) OTO appropriation with a continuing appropriation could be considered. Clearly, receiving a portion of this funding would benefit the MBMG in attaining its goals. I would be happy to provide further response to any questions.

Sincerely,



Edmond G. Deal  
Director and State Geologist

Cc: Sheila Stearns, Commissioner of Higher Education, Montana University System  
George Dennison, President, The University of Montana  
Frank Gilmore, Chancellor, Montana Tech of The University of Montana  
Chairman Jon Sesso, House Appropriations Committee



## MBMG Goals: 2011 Biennium

2009 Montana Legislative Session

Use General Fund Appropriation to:

- Maintain core programs on Montana's geology/resources.
- Provide match required for contracts/grants.
- Conduct additional investigations as appropriate.
- Expand databases, internet access, and delivery of information.



Early 2010— move into Natural Resources Building.



## GWAP Goals: 2011 Biennium

2009 Montana Legislative Session

**Monitoring:** Continue building long-term water-level and water-quality records.

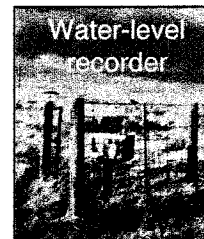
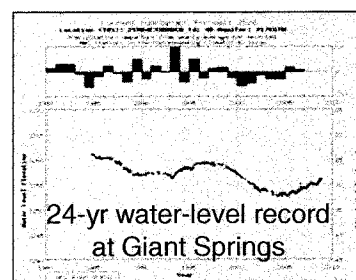
- Install telemetry to improve network efficiency.

**Characterization:** Continue field work in the Gallatin-Madison Study area.

- Begin Park-Sweet Grass study area.
- Release at least 5-7 new maps and 1 atlas.

**GWIC:** New QA/QC tools to improve data quality.

- Improve public interface through implementation of mapping tools.



## **Montana Forest and Conservation Experiment Station: Goals and Objectives for the 2011 Biennium**



### **Introduction**

The Montana Forest and Conservation Experiment Station (MFCES) is the state-wide agency established by the Montana Legislature in 1937 to provide research, education, and outreach on critical issues affecting Montana's forests. Administered by the Montana University System through The University of Montana's College of Forestry and Conservation, MFCES has a proud history of serving Montanans through its independent, science-based approach to difficult forest management questions. Research and demonstrations over the years have made vital contributions on effective ways to grow timber, promote forest health, protect clean water, and sustain high-quality wildlife habitat. Work conducted through the MFCES will continue to generate opportunities for high-wage jobs, a diverse economy, and a superior quality of life for the people of Montana.

MFCES embraces an approach of openness and partnership with other forest landowners, schools, businesses, and public agencies across the state. It encourages joint projects and welcomes other organizations to utilize its facilities for educational and outreach purposes. The MFCES owns and manages two properties for research and outreach – the Lubrecht Experimental Forest, a 28,000 acre forest property that houses a conference center and forestry camp, and the Bandy Experimental Ranch, a 3,500 acre working ranch that provides a model for complementary management actions to sustain ecological functions and rural livelihoods.

### **Goals of the Montana Forest and Conservation Experiment Station**

The long-standing goals of the MFCES are threefold: (1) To provide understanding and demonstration of the role and function of forests and conservation to the well-being of the people of Montana; (2) To foster educational attainment for upcoming generations of conservation leaders; and (3) To create employment opportunities for Montanans from the wise use and stewardship of forests. These goals are realized through the design and execution of research projects, the establishment of formal educational programs and workshops to disseminate the latest discoveries in forest management, and outreach to public and private partners to test and evaluate the effects and benefits of forest management operations. As new questions or concerns regarding forest management emerge, MFCES uses its solid foundation to attract additional financial resources to conduct research and outreach programs. Over the last decade, the MFCES has leveraged state resources by a remarkable ratio of over 9 to 1 via external contracts and grants, such that in any given biennium, MFCES contributes approximately \$20 million to Montana's economy.

### **Goals and Objectives for the 2011 Biennium**

For the upcoming biennium MFCES will continue its ongoing work in key areas of forest management such as the impacts of management treatments on forest health, methods to combat insect attacks, efficient logging

systems, measures to protect watersheds, and management practices to improve the full complement of native Montana wildlife. In addition, the MFCES is proposing action on two new, critical areas affecting forests: (1) The impact of changing climate on Montana's forests, farms, and rangelands; and (2) The means to use forests while protecting Montana residents from wildfire within the Wildland Urban Interface.

### **Support for a Montana Climate Office**

MFCES is requesting \$165,000 over the next biennium to support the state's economy through the firm set up and strengthening of a State Climate Office.

**Goal:** Provide Montana ranchers, farmers, forest owners, and citizens with easily accessible, reliable, high-quality information on climate trends, moisture availability, and climate impacts that focus on Montana needs.

**Objective 1:** Establish in the Montana Climate Office by the end of 2009, an expanded, user-friendly web presence that is linked to all forms of appropriate climate and moisture data, continuously updated and tailored to the interests of Montana landowners.

**Objective 2:** By the end of 2009 create an ongoing outreach program that joins the Montana Climate Office with other state agencies and services, such as the Extension Service, to identify climate trend data needs of Montana landowners and deliver necessary information to a broad range of users



### **Rationale for the Initiative**

Climate change affects Montana through rising temperatures and shorter winters, persistent summer droughts and changes in the resiliency of plant and animal communities. Ranchers, farmers, residents of cities and towns, and members of the tourism community are feeling the effects of these changes. Montana currently has no capability to develop climate measures or conduct locally relevant climate change analysis to understand the potential impact of these changes on Montana's economy. Additionally, Montana lacks a means to transfer needed climate information to all the affected individuals, businesses, and agencies that need real-time, accurate information and maps to respond and adapt to climate changes. To be forewarned is to be forearmed.

A PhD level bio-meteorologist coupled with an outreach specialist would be able to develop new climate measures and indicators for the state and update them regularly. They would be able to develop trustworthy state maps of growing seasons, heating and cooling days, energy forecasting, irrigation demand, solar loading, wind potential, and averages and extremes of temperature and precipitation. More importantly, they would provide the tools and access to get this information into the hands of those who need it most. Although a skeletal Montana Climate Office is already hosted by the MFCES, it is unfunded and inadequate for Montana's needs.



## Implementation of the Initiative

Funding of the initiative would allow for the support of a PhD bio-meteorologist and a Masters-level outreach coordinator to develop and provide the needed interactive tools and products from the State Climate Office. This small staff would work with other climate research and information resources nationwide to create an accessible, user-friendly web presence that offers real-time data and analysis on climate changes and impacts to all Montanans. Outreach activities would utilize existing extension offices and other agency capabilities to sponsor workshops and generate educational materials for all Montanans to receive critical information on climate trends and their implications to investments and land use decisions. Office space and administrative support would be provided by existing MFCES resources to increase efficiency and direct all new resources to useable products for Montana residents and businesses.

### Support for Improved Uses of Forests in the Wildland Urban Interface for Biofuels and Fire Risk Reduction

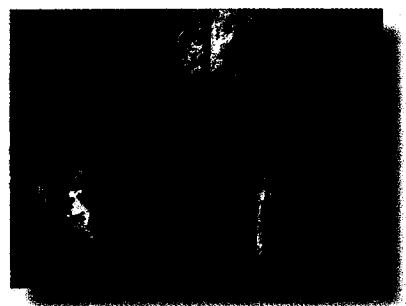
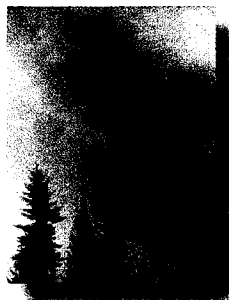
MFCES is requesting \$200,000 over the next biennium to improve the use of Montana's forests through the initiation of a forestry, wildland fire, and biofuels applied research program on the wildland urban interface in Montana.

**Goals:** (1) Increase the use of forests in Montana to support Montana forest industries by finding efficient ways to utilize Montana forests in the wildland-urban interface that include biofuels for energy; and (2) Reduce the risk from wildfire to Montana rural residents in the wildland urban interface while lowering the cost of fire suppression.

**Objective 1:** By summer 2010 establish research projects and demonstration areas on methods to increase efficiencies in the harvest, transport, and utilization of forest fuels in forest types common in the wildland urban interface.

**Objective 2:** Explore and describe by mid 2010 the economic potential of biofuels for Montana energy needs.

**Objective 3:** Synthesize existing research and apply new discoveries on methods to relieve wildfire risk and improve cost-savings for fire suppression organizations by the end of 2010.



### Rationale for the Initiative

Many Montana residents live within the wildland-urban interface (sometimes called the "WUI"), where frequent wildfires present risk to their homes and infrastructure. There are numerous opportunities across the state to provide science-based forest treatments in the WUI to help reduce fire risk while improving the vigor, productivity, and beauty of these forests. Simultaneously, the use of the wood products that emerge from the WUI provide substantial biomass that can be converted to energy (as biofuels) for homes, schools, or other energy needs. Yet the design of WUI treatments, the needs for ongoing maintenance, the ecological impacts, and the economic potential for biofuels can vary greatly depending on specific resource conditions or locations. There is a critical need to develop, test, and communicate operational guidelines for efficient and effective treatments across the varied WUI landscape.

Greater knowledge of potential WUI treatments and their benefits would offer forest landowners confidence that their diverse range of objectives could be fulfilled. Science-tested methods to improve the harvesting and utilization of wood products and other woody biomass from the WUI would allow timber operators to increase the number of treatments across Montana, creating additional jobs and income. The active treatment of forests with high fuel loadings within the WUI would mitigate the impacts from high intensity wildfires, reduce the cost of wildfire suppression and provide additional protection from wildfire risk to WUI residents.

### **Implementation of the Initiative**

Financial support to the WUI initiative will allow the establishment of timely research projects and science-based techniques to improve harvest operations and increase the profitability of forest operations. Implementation needs include support to a PhD-level forest researcher to coordinate the research program and develop outreach materials and workshops to distribute research findings. Demonstration areas will be established at Lubrecht Forest and other locations among cooperating landowners to allow innovations to be adopted in multiple locations across the state. Closer linkages with potential partners among fire suppression organizations and the existing forest stewardship network will be encouraged by the development of materials and web-based products that identify treatment opportunities and the economic implications of the utilization of biofuels. Application of research findings will also be advanced by the additional training made available to students at The University of Montana on these WUI treatment opportunities.

James Burchfield  
Interim Director  
MFCES  
January 30, 2009

